

always looking out to protect our wonderful free enterprise system.

I want to particularly note that each Christmas since 1988, the holidays for many rural families in Washington have been a bit brighter—and the Legislative Building a bit more festive—since Don Brunell founded the Holiday Kids' Tree Program, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for needy families around the state and establishing the community tradition of a tree lighting each December in the state capitol.

Throughout his distinguished career, Don has maintained his strong belief in family, as evidenced by his marriage of 42 years to wife Jeri, children Jennifer, Carey, Erin, Don, Dan and Colleen and his 14 grandchildren; and Don has also remained committed to those serving in the U.S. armed forces, himself a veteran with 23 years of service in the U.S. Army, Montana and Washington Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve as a special forces, infantry and public affairs officer.

It is bittersweet to see such a distinguished career draw to a close, but I must acknowledge Don will retire from AWB in January 2014, making the legislative session that is drawing to a close in Washington state the last one with Don as president of the state's largest and oldest business association.

Future legislators and business leaders should draw inspiration from his steadfastness and dedication to the cause of freedom and free enterprise that was a constant during his long and honorable career.

THE MCCOLLUM AMENDMENT TO
THE FY14 DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS
BILL PROHIBITING FUNDS
FOR CIA LETHAL DRONE
STRIKES

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2013

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House Appropriations Committee I offered an amendment to the fiscal year 2014 defense appropriations bill regarding lethal drone strikes. The amendment stated:

None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for weapons strikes or lethal action using unmanned aerial vehicles unless conducted by a member of the Armed Forces under the authority provided pursuant to Title 10, United States Code.

The amendment was defeated in committee on a voice vote and my request for a recorded vote was denied by the committee. It is my intention to offer this same amendment on the floor of the House in the coming weeks when the defense appropriations bill is debated by the full House.

My statement (as prepared for delivery in committee) is as follows:

Full Appropriations Committee Statement on the McCollum Amendment:

Mr. Chairman, within the classified portion of this bill hundreds of millions of dollars, perhaps billions, are appropriated for a targeted killing program operated by the Central Intelligence Agency.

The CIA operates a fleet of weaponized drones armed with laser guided Hellfire mis-

siles. They conduct lethal air strikes against targets in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. The program's targets are identified terrorists or they are unidentified individuals targeted and killed based on a pattern of behavior.

My amendment places sole responsibility for conducting lethal military action using weaponized drones in the hands of the Department of Defense conducted by members of the Armed Forces under the authority of Title 10 of the U.S. Code.

The CIA's use of drones to conduct surveillance and intelligence gathering in support of Defense Department lethal action continues under my amendment.

Some of our colleagues do not believe that the Pentagon is not up to the task of carrying out this responsibility. I disagree with that.

The Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) is conducting drone strikes now. The Air Force and the Army possess and operate weaponized drones. They operate within a clear chain of command and legal accountability. Lethal military operations using sophisticated weapons systems should be in the hands of the Secretary of Defense and military commanders who are accountable to Congress.

CIA strikes have been effective. Terrorists have been killed. But they are not secret. The whole world knows these are CIA strikes operating on behalf of the American people, without transparency, accountability or oversight.

In fact, CIA Director John Brennan has actually agree with this amendment. During his Senate confirmation hearing he stated, "The CIA should not be doing traditional military activities and operations."

There are costs associated with these targeted killings. Hundreds of innocent civilians have been killed. There are legal questions, human rights concerns, foreign policy implications and ultimately moral issues.

You could dismiss all of these concerns because the program is killing terrorists.

But in the near future, as armed drone technology proliferates, if we dismiss these concerns I can guarantee you that China, Iran, Russia and other nations will also dismiss these concerns when they are capable of conducting targeted killings. Why, because we are setting the example.

If we want other countries to use these technologies responsibly, then we must use them responsibly. What's at stake is our country's moral authority.

The Obama Administration is not leading on this issue of ensuring transparency, accountability and oversight. The president claims these CIA strikes are within "clear guidelines, oversight and accountability" that his administration determined all by itself—without input or even the consideration of Congress.

And Congress has done less. In fact Congress has done nothing except write a black check that allows a paramilitary force of CIA officers and civilian contractors to kill suspected terrorists and anyone else unlucky enough to be in the vicinity—including women and children—using one of the most sophisticated weapons platforms in our military arsenal.

For this Congress and this committee to passively allow the CIA to fire laser guided missiles at human targets in countries in which we are not at war without demanding oversight or accountability is a complete abdication of our sworn obligation to the Constitution and our citizens.

This is not intelligence gathering, these are military operations that should be conducted by our Armed Forces and with direct oversight by Congress.

Our country is at war with Al-Qaeda and its terrorist affiliates. I trust the members of our Armed Forces to do their job, defeat the enemy, and protect our nation. The drone strike program is a military program and Congress should demand that it be conducted within the same legal framework as any other military operation during a time of war.

McCollum statement at the close of debate on the amendment:

It is no surprise the White House opposes this amendment. The executive branch wants to maintain its CIA drone program and its target list without congressional oversight, without transparency or accountability.

It is absolutely appropriate and responsible for this committee to make the Department of Defense solely responsible for military operations using armed drone program. Doing so does not diminish our military capacity, it in fact it strengthens the program with regard to international law and accountability to Congress and the American people.

Right now the CIA is running an assassination program and the world is watching.

Soon China, Russia and Iran will have the same capability and will use the CIA's standard of killing anyone profiled as an enemy.

It is time Congress demands transparency, accountability, and oversight to a program that has killed thousands of people—including innocent civilians.

THANKING GERALD "JERRY" BENNETT
FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 2013

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank Mr. Gerald E. Bennett for over 43 years of outstanding service to the United States House of Representatives.

Jerry is retiring this week as Chief Logistics Officer of Logistics and Support, with more than four decades of House experience. He first started working for the House of Representatives in 1969 as part of a summer employment program under the Office of the Doorkeeper. From folding Member mailings to distributing paychecks, he provided a number of important services. Over the years, he moved up the ranks, holding positions as a Maintenance Supervisor, Assistant Deputy Director, Manager, and Director of Logistics. He then served as Assistant Chief Administrative Officer and Assets, Furnishings, and Logistics Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, before becoming the Chief Logistics Officer of Logistics and Support.

Throughout his career, Jerry's thoughtfulness and positive attitude has earned him the respect and confidence of countless employees. It is not unusual to see Jerry lending a listening ear or providing sound guidance to an employee. His caring and encouraging nature is valued by this institution and its employees.

Jerry has often said that he always felt a powerful sense of purpose and a role in something deeply important. His commitment to